DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 212 100 EC 141 503

TITLE [Development of a Vocational Training Model for Severely Handicapped and Deaf-Blind Adolescents.]
INSTITUTION Teaching Research Infant and Child Center, Monmouth, Oreg.
PUB DATE Jun 81
NOTE 6p.
JOURNAL CIT Teaching Research Infant and Child Center Newsletter; v9 n4 Jun 1981

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adolescents; *Deaf Blind; *Models; Program Descriptions; Secondary Education; *Severe Disabilities; *Vocational Education

ABSTRACT

The newsletter describes the development of a vocational training model for severely handicapped and deaf blind adolescents. The need for innovative vocational models in the secondary school is discussed. Three stages of the vocational training model are presented--assessment in five job samples (food service, groundskeeping-agriculture, janitorial-maintenance, office-clerical, recycling); extensive training in two of the five samples; and training resulting in long term employment. The role of the vocational trainer is seen to include training the teacher, the teacher's assistant, and student volunteers to carry out the direct training; updating program data; scheduling future placements; identifying Stage 2 and 3 placements; and observing the teacher, assistant, and volunteers as they conduct vocational training. (SB)

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Prepared by the Staff of Special Education Department

Teaching Research, Monmouth, Oregon 97361 **Vol. IX, No. 4, June, 1981**

This is the seventeenth of a series of newsletter editions which will describe the activities of the Teaching Research Infant and Child Center. The Teaching Research Infant and Child Center consists of:

—Integrated Preschool Program: Valerie Aschbacher, Judy Clark
—Parent Training Clinic: Bill Moore
—Prescriptive Program: Gail Rogers
—Group Home for Severely Handicapped: Dave Templeman and Mary Lee Fay
—Elementary Classroom for Severely Handicapped, located in Monmouth-Independence School District: Sue Garner
—Secondary Classroom for Severely Handicapped, located in Monmouth-Independence School District: Nancy Trecker, Lynn Killian Gage and Randy Sullivan
—Secondary Classroom for Mildly Mentally Retarded/Severely Emotionally Disturbed, located in Salem School District: Chris Hadden, Vicki Nishioka
—Group Home for Mildly Mentally Retarded/Severely Emotionally Disturbed: Debbie Kraus
—Training Staff: Torry Templeman, Carol Bunse, Tina Farnes, Joyce Petersen, Valerie Miller

This issue of the newsletter describes the development of a vocational training model for severely handicapped and deaf-blind adolescents. The model is intended for use in public secondary schools. The vocational training model includes three stages of training that culminate in community work placement. The vocational model fits into a coordinated curriculum aimed at preparing the handicapped adolescent for the demands of adult life. A variety of products are being developed. Dissemination activities include opportunities for secondary school personnel to receive training in all aspects of the model. This issue was prepared by Jay Buckley and Isabelle Egan.

The Need for Innovative Vocational Models in the Secondary School

The need for innovative vocational programming for severely handicapped and deaf-blind youth can be explained by four statements. First, the rubella epidemic of 1963-1965 caused a higher number of children to be born with multiple handicaps including severe mental retardation, blindness, deafness, and varying levels of motor impairment. These children are now reaching adolescence. They face adulthood with probably the least likelihood of any minority to find social and economic security. However, ongoing research (Model Project for Deaf-Blind Youth, BEH Contract #300-78-0336 conducted at Teaching Research Infant and Child Center) demonstrates that small numbers of deaf-blind youth can be integrated into non-categorical classrooms for the moderately and severely handicapped. This integration, even if completely successful brings up the second statement.

Including deaf-blind youth in the larger severely handicapped group still leaves unsolved the problem that only a few of this larger group are currently involved in vocational activity (Gold, M., and Pomerantz, D., 1978). Several authors (Fredericks, *et al*, *Associated Work Skills Curriculum*, in press, Rusch, 1979, and Wehman and McLaughlin, 1980) have reviewed the literature and have found that the specific instructional techniques necessary to train the severely handicapped to perform sophisticated vocational tasks have been identified and validated by Crosson (1969), Gold (1972), Bellamy (1975, 1977 and 1979), and Loos and Tizard (1955). These investigators agree that successful instruction includes the use of task analyses and positive reinforcement. Yet their success in training the severely handicapped leads to the third statement.

All of the above research was conducted in sheltered environments. Very little is known about training the severely handi-

capped in community placements (Rusch, 1979, Fredericks, in press and Wehman and McLaughlin, 1980). Gold and his associates have demonstrated that such community placement is possible.

The fourth statement is also drawn from the research that successfully demonstrates that the severely handicapped are capable of productive work. The subjects of these studies were adults. The severely handicapped adult faces different demands than the severely handicapped adolescent. The adult must learn to function in an adult world as soon as possible. The adolescent has time to prepare for the adult world. While few would argue that the main focus of secondary education for the handicapped should be preparation for the demands of adult life, little has been done to design secondary programs to help students meet these demands.

Model Development

In the autumn of 1979 the Teaching Research staff began an evaluation of the program content offered to adolescent students in the Teaching Research Infant and Child Center Classrooms for the Severely Handicapped. Two courses of action were charted. First, staff reviewed the literature available on model secondary programs and on the demands placed on individuals, handicapped or not, when they reach adulthood. Second, staff visited exemplary secondary programs. It was decided that the most pressing need in the classroom for secondary aged students was for development of a comprehensive vocational model that would prepare the students, some of whom were deaf-blind, for the demands they would face as adults.

The review of existing programs, combined with Teaching Research's extensive experience in building educational models and teaching the severely handicapped, lead to the formulation of seven basic assumptions:

1. Secondary education must anticipate the demands of all present and future environments in which a student will function. The identification of the next environment should provide the priority for choosing skills within curricular domains (Brown, *et al*, 1979, Mithaug and Haring, 1977).
2. Vocational programming should be one part of a varied and coordinated curriculum that also includes communication skills, social skills, independent living skills, and community mobility skills (Gold, M. and Pomerantz, D., 1978; Rusch, 1979 and Wehman and McLaughlin, 1980).
3. Traditional assessment instruments do not measure the work potential for the severely handicapped (Wehman and McLaughlin, 1980). Vocational evaluation is most effectively carried out when skill training is incorporated into the evaluation activities (Revell, Kriloff, and Sarkees, 1980).
4. Training in more than one type of work increases the marketability of the student (Wehman and McLaughlin, 1980) and increases his choices in his future life.
5. Most school districts have personnel designated as vocational educators. In many cases these individuals do not have the training to develop and administer vocational training programs for the severely handicapped.
6. Even adequately trained vocational educators cannot meet the extensive time commitments needed to provide one-to-one training for the severely handicapped youth. Therefore, teaching assistants and volunteers must be trained to conduct vocational training.
7. The model should be based on behavioral theory, accountable and data based. Therefore, procedures utilized would be based on those described in *A Data Based Classroom for Moderately and Severely Handicapped* (Fredericks, *et al*, 1979).

Pilot work in vocational training began in January of 1980 in the secondary classroom located at Teaching Research. In the spring of 1980 the Office of Special Education sent out a request for proposals that would develop innovative vocational models suitable for deaf-blind youth. Bud Fredericks and Jay Buckley submitted a proposal. On September 1, 1980 The Teaching Research 3 Stage Vocational Training Program began receiving funds as one of three innovative models chosen by the Office of Special Education. In October of 1980, Teaching Research moved its Secondary Severely Handicapped Class into the Monmouth-Independence Public School System.

The Teaching Research 3 Stage Vocational Training Program

Introduction

This model addresses the problems raised earlier. Deaf-blind youth will be integrated into a non-categorical educational setting. The program will provide an innovative vocational program for all severely handicapped youth. The students will experience community vocational placements early in their school experience. In addition, curricular emphasis will be on vocational and independent living skills, two areas that cannot be separated for successful community placement (Rusch, 1979, Wehman and McLaughlin, 1980). The vocational program includes an extensive assessment stage; students will emerge with skills in two different types of work, and the final stage does not end until students are permanently employed. Project staff feel that at the least, the deaf-blind student will be able to function well in a sheltered workshop. At best, he will take his place in competitive employment.

Stage 1—Assessment in Five Job Samples:

The purpose of Stage 1 is to allow a student to sample different types of work in order that a more empirical decision can be made regarding future specialization and training. Students are scheduled for up to ten hours per week of work experience in each of five job samples. Each job sample lasts for six weeks.

The vocational training that students participate in has been determined by identifying jobs that are available in the local community. Each youth will undergo vocational assessment and training in five different work areas. These include:

Food Service
Groundskeeping-Agriculture
Janitorial-Maintenance
Office-Clerical
Recycling

Food Service includes, at this point, over 60 skills that reflect the kind of work available in most cafeterias, restaurants, institutional kitchenery, small fast food establishments, and schools.

Groundskeeping and Agricultural Skills includes all the discrete skills comprising landscaping, playing field maintenance, park maintenance, gardening, greenhouse care, and farm help. The Willamette Valley provides ample opportunity for employment in these areas.

Janitorial-Maintenance includes traditional custodial chores such as vacuuming, mopping, window washing, table and desk cleaning, etc. Also included in this work sample are opportunities to experience office cleaning, hotel-motel maintenance, and the minor repairs associated with this type of work.

Office-Clerical includes collating, stapling, stuffing and sealing various types of mail-outs, filing and sorting, intra-office delivery, xerox machine operation, storing office supplies in their proper place, and many other skills. Central to this work sample is the ability to circulate through the business without disrupting the flow of work of others.

Recycling reflects the special atmosphere that Oregon provides. Locally and state wide, residents are saving glass, paper, cans, newspaper, and cardboard. This is seen as a particularly appropriate endeavor for deaf-blind youth because many of the necessary discriminations do not rely on visual stimuli. The exciting part of the recycling work sample is that there is no limit to the materials that can be recycled, and that service in this industry is not seen as a threat to the labor force. Rather, it gives the handicapped a positive identity in their communities.

The individual task analyzed sequences used in these five work samples reflect actual work activities peculiar to the community in which Teaching Research is located. While the instructional sequences would be of little value to other practitioners, lists of the core skills germane to each work sample can be of value. Teaching Research will publish a list of suggested skills in which students should be assessed, procedures for the design of a similar vocational program, and ideas for work samples that are not practical in rural Oregon but would be in urban areas. An

example of a such work sample is warehousing which in large urban areas serves as a real employment resource.

Stage 1 is proposed for two reasons:

1. to allow the student to decide if he/she has further interest in a more extended job placement in some of the five job samples after experiencing related tasks for a period of six weeks.
2. to allow parents and educational staff to determine if the student demonstrates interest and /or ability in the job sample.

It is emphasized that Stage 1 is an assessment process. During this process it is hoped that the choices a student faces can be narrowed to work in two different job areas. Thus, some amount of failure within Stage 1 should be expected.

The method employed in Stage 1 is placement in different types of work within each job sample. Each job sample lasts for a period of six weeks. Tasks performed within each of these different roles are task analyzed. Students work with vocational trainers to demonstrate proficiency in as many skills as possible within the six week job sample.

Stage 1 evaluation is based on the percent of task analyses mastered, the rate of student acquisition, the student's apparent satisfaction with the work sample, on and off task behavior data, and trainer, teacher and parent satisfaction surveys. Based on careful analysis of the above indices for all five job samples, two work samples will be chosen for extensive programming during Stage 2.

Stage 2 - Extensive Training in Two Samples:

The purpose of Stage 2 is to collect data for a greater number of skills over an extended period of time, and to allow the student to function in increasingly more realistic work settings, primarily in the community.

The method employed is first to break the school year into two blocks. In each of these blocks the student will be placed in different roles within the job sample. For example the student might begin by reviewing the skills he/she experienced during Stage 1 within the school, or on the school grounds. Then the student will move to work placements in the local community accompanied by the vocational trainer. All tasks will be task analyzed. Greater emphasis will be placed on normalized work routines. Trainer, teacher, parent, and, in this phase, employer satisfaction surveys will be completed half-way through the block and at the completion of each of the extended job samples.

Evaluation will be based on training data, social and behavioral problems or the lack there-of, student reaction to the work experienced, and the satisfaction surveys mentioned above. Based on the data collected in this stage, parents, surrogate parents, educational staff, Vocational Rehabilitation personnel, Division of Mental Health representatives, and the student will decide on a type of work in which the student will receive training enabling him/her to pursue more extensive employment in one of the two work blocks experienced in this stage. It should be noted that if indicators predicting some hope for success are not present the student could be assigned for Stage 2 training in another job sample, or he/she may be allowed to repeat the extensive training Stage 2 allows in one of the other samples already completed. In no instance would a student be advanced to Stage 3 without strong evidence that such a placement might result in prolonged employment.

Stage 3 - Training Resulting in Long-Term Employment:

The purpose of Stage 3 is to provide training to the point that the student is employed without the supervision of a vocational trainer. It is anticipated that Stage 3 will cover a span of at least 1 full school year.

The method proposed for Stage 3 is the same as Stage 2, but in this case carried to complete independent functioning. In this stage the vocational trainer will be faded. At that point only probe data will be maintained. Follow-up procedures will be shared with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Evaluation in this stage consists of the student's ability to work independently on whatever number of tasks comprise his/her particular job. Production data will be maintained by the vocational trainer and by the student's supervisor. Stage 3 will continue until the student has remained at specified criteria for all aspects of his/her job for 6 months. At this point the case will be turned over to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

The supervision of the Teaching Research 3-Stage Vocational Training Program is the duty of the vocational trainer in conjunction with the classroom teacher. The designation of a vocational trainer presents a variation from the educational staff pattern described in The *Data Based Classroom for the Moderately and Severely Handicapped* (Fredericks, *et al*, 1979). After surveying high schools in communities of five varying sizes in Oregon, and after ascertaining that even the smallest of these school districts had on its staff a person charged with vocational education, it was decided to add the position of vocational trainer.

Successful implementation of the Teaching Research 3 Stage Vocational Program depends on the interaction of three key components: procedures for placement and supervision, the presence of a relevant curriculum, and finally, the application of advanced instructional technology.

The Vocational Trainer

Most school districts have an individual who serves as a vocational educator. In some cases this person is a highly paid tenured teacher who may have several assistants. In other districts an assistant teacher may be assigned the responsibility for an entire high school.

In many schools the vocational educators serve only non-handicapped students. Sometimes the omission of handicapped students is intentional. Often the vocational educator simply is not trained to meet the needs of the handicapped student. This is especially true when students are severely handicapped and deaf-blind.

When it came time to choose a vocational trainer for the Teaching Research 3 Stage Vocational Training Program, an assistant teacher was selected. This choice was made for two reasons. First, the individual chosen, Mr. Randy Sullivan, is a committed and competent professional. Second, many small school districts do not have the funds available to add one or more additional teachers. By selecting a trainer from the ranks of the assistant teachers, we hoped to allay the fears that only Masters level educators could do the fine job that Mr. Sullivan does.

At the beginning of the project, Mr. Sullivan performed all vocational responsibilities for the Severely Handicapped Secondary Class with the assistance of a few student volunteers he had trained. He received no assistance from the class' regular teacher or from her assistant. As the school year progressed other special education teachers requested his assistance. Mr. Sullivan was very willing to help, but had no spare time.

Project staff felt that the role of the vocational trainer needed to be clarified. We were faced with three questions:

1. Should the vocational trainer be the sole individual responsible for the design, development and scheduling of the vocational program, and for direct training of each student?
2. If so, could others be convinced of the efficiency of the model if a vocational trainer is needed for each special education classroom?
3. Or, could the vocational trainer serve in a consultant role, in which he would still place students, write training programs, but then train the teacher, her assistant and student volunteers to carry out the direct training?

Project staff decided to try using the vocational trainer as a consultant. Mr. Sullivan was asked to train the teacher, her assistant and some student volunteers to carry out the direct training. In a period of two weeks this training was completed, and the classroom staff was able to run the program without the assistance of the vocational trainer. The vocational trainer then concentrated on updating program data, scheduling future placements, identifying Stage 2 and 3 placements, and taking observations of the teacher, assistant, and volunteers as they conducted vocational training. The trainer was also able to concentrate more on the training needs of the deaf-blind students.

Once students are placed in community job placements in Stage 3, the trainer will assume direct training responsibility. Stage 1 placements and most Stage 2 placements can now be managed by classroom staff.

Future editions of this newsletter will report results achieved.

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This is the first of 7 newsletters to be produced over the next two and one-half years by the staff of Teaching Research's Secondary Vocational Project. Future newsletters will deal with issues such as student training results, inservice training opportunities for vocational trainers, administrators, teachers and teaching assistants, inservice training results, updated training systems, and newly developed educational products. A subscription blank follows:

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Text application: Collateral reading for *Special Education Administration* and courses in *curriculum development and methods of instruction* in deaf education/mental retardation. Appropriate at both graduate and undergraduate level.

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MATERIALS CATALOG

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Recommended Reading

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